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A field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup

For The Week Ending October 19, 2003

Fair week for Field Work: There were 4 days suitable for field work. Soil moisture was rated as 69 percent adequate and 31 percent surplus. Principal farm activities included making hay; harvesting corn silage; harvesting corn and soybeans; fall plowing; planting wheat and barley; spreading manure, lime and fertilizer; caring for livestock; harvesting, processing and canning/freezing fruit and vegetables.

Crops: After a break in the wet weather, rain returned to the Commonwealth last week, however corn acres harvested for grain advanced to 30 percent complete, 28 percent behind last year and 13 percent behind the five year average. The corn crop condition was rated as 4 percent very poor, 9 percent poor, 23 percent fair, 40 percent good and 24 percent excellent, a slight decrease as compared to prior week. Ninety-two percent of the corn acreage has reached the dent stage and 75 percent has reached maturity. Corn silage harvest was 88 percent complete, 9 and 6 percent behind 2002 and the five-year average, respectively. Soybean acres harvested was twenty-eight percent complete last week, 7 percent ahead of the pace set last season and 6 percent above the five year average. The condition of the soybean crop was rated as 2 percent very poor, 6 percent poor, 20 percent fair, 53 percent good and 19 percent excellent. Fall tillage continues to run behind the average, with only 48 percent complete, still 19 percent behind the five-year average. With 60 percent of winter wheat planted, only 3 percent less than the five-year average, 34 percent of the planted acreage has emerged. Barley planted advanced to 69 percent complete, considerably lower than the 92 percent pace set last fall. Last week, the quality of hay made declined as 7 percent was rated as very poor, 21 percent was poor, 38 percent was fair, and only 30 percent was good and 4 percent was excellent. The fourth cutting of alfalfa advanced to 66 percent complete, 17 percent behind 2002 and 14 percent behind the five-year average. The second cutting of timothy clover reached 94 percent complete, slightly behind the previous year and the five year average.

Livestock: Pasture conditions across Pennsylvania declined slightly over the past week due the cooler wet conditions. Five percent of pasture land was rated very poor, 15 percent was rated poor, 20 percent was rated fair, 48 percent was rated good and 12 percent was rated excellent.

Fruit & Vegetable: Apple harvest advanced to 76 percent complete, declining to 6 percent behind the five-year average. The percent of grapes harvested continues to vary widely across the Commonwealth. However, grape harvest for the state advanced to 51 percent complete, 34 behind 2002 harvest and trailing the five year average by 39 percent. The potato harvest advanced slightly to 88 percent complete, 2 percent behind last year and the five year average.

U.S. As of October 12, 2003: Temperatures were above normal for almost the entire Nation. In the northern Great Plains and western Corn Belt, temperatures were well above normal, with little rainfall, aiding dry-down and encouraging harvest of summer crops. Farther east, in the Corn Belt, Ohio Valley, and Northeast, similar conditions and progress prevailed, although temperatures were just slightly above normal. The central and southern Great Plains experienced moderate to heavy rainfall in some areas, promoting winter wheat emergence, but little to no precipitation in the western portions of the region. Only light, scattered rain fell from the central High Plains northward into Montana and across the Northwest, where concerns over soil moisture shortages remain. Moderate rainfall in the Pacific Northwest was limited to coastal areas. Scattered but heavy showers in parts of the Mississippi Delta and Southeast caused only minor fieldwork delays. Corn: Ninety-five percent of the crop was mature, 1 percentage point behind last year at this time and 2 points behind normal. Thirty-nine percent of the crop had been harvested, 3 points more than last year but 5 points below the 5-year average. Warm weather accelerated maturation in the Corn Belt and Ohio Valley, where the crop had been slow to mature. By the end of the week, maturity of the crop in the Corn Belt advanced to near-normal, but the Ohio Valley was still 1 week or more behind normal. Despite the warm, dry weather throughout the Corn Belt, harvest progress was limited, as producers continued to focus their efforts on harvesting soybeans and planting winter wheat. The Ohio Valley remained about 1 week behind its normal harvest pace. Soybeans: Ninety-five percent of the crop was dropping leaves, the same as last year but 1 percentage point behind the 5-year average. Sixty percent of the crop had been harvested, 10 points ahead of last year and 2 points ahead of the normal pace. Warm, dry weather throughout most of the major-producing areas promoted harvest. Across the Nation, 23 percent of the crop was harvested during the week. Producers in Nebraska harvested 38 percent of their crop, while those in Michigan, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin harvested 30 percent or more. Winter Wheat: Seeding advanced to 74 percent complete, 1 percentage point ahead of last year and 6 points ahead of the 5-year average. Forty-eight percent of the expected acreage had emerged, 2 points behind last year but 6 points ahead of normal. Planting progressed rapidly in the Corn Belt and Ohio Valley, where the weather was favorable. Ohio growers planted 31 percent of their crop during the week, while Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri producers planted over 20 percent. The lack of rain in the Corn Belt and Ohio Valley was not as favorable for emergence, as most of the region fell behind the normal pace. However, emergence progressed rapidly in other areas, with over 20 percent of the crop emerging in Colorado, Kansas, Montana, and Washington during the week.

Weather Data For Week Ending October 19, 2003

STATION	LAST WEEK WEATHER SUMMARY						April 1, 03 - October 19, 03					GDD
	TEMPERATURE			PRECIPITATION			PRECIPITATION		GDD BASE 50F		BASE	
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	TOT
NORTHWEST												
Erie	71	39	52	-2	1.27	2	24.96	-0.02	87	2574	-21	4389
Franklin_AG	68	33	49	-3	1.66	4	35.17	+8.46	129	2277	-101	4097
Meadville	67	34	49	-2	1.75	2	33.61	+6.72	107	2293	+115	4100
Mercer	70	24	46	-5	1.67	2	38.42	+13.01	91	1909	-447	3680
Springboro	68	32	48	-5	2.48	5	32.68	+8.57	101	2136	-408	3906
Warren	68	34	48	-3	1.60	3	36.28	+9.26	102	2263	-34	4053
NORTH CENTRAL												
Bradford_Region	65	27	44	-3	1.39	4	33.20	+6.35	113	1752	+106	3456
Emporium	73	34	49	+2	1.53	6	38.62	+12.15	108	2323	+448	4154
Kane	63	25	40	-6	1.35	2	30.67	+3.22	91	1229	-377	2798
Laporte	71	31	47	-4	1.78	3	36.27	+11.43	99	2033	-315	3752
Lock_Haven	76	38	51	+1	0.89	3	30.61	+6.24	94	2692	+193	4565
Port_Allegany	68	29	46	-3	1.36	4	35.98	+10.42	99	1933	+111	3655
Renovo	72	33	50	-2	1.33	3	31.27	+6.90	102	2541	+42	4409
Ridgway	68	30	45	-3	1.23	4	30.09	+3.62	93	1916	+41	3676
Stevenson_Dam	74	36	49	+2	1.39	3	32.85	+6.38	111	2330	+455	4166
Towanda	74	33	49	-2	1.35	4	32.35	+11.70	116	2343	-24	4144
Wellsboro	74	28	46	-2	0.90	3	31.15	+10.34	95	1927	+163	3640
Williamsport_AP	74	36	52	+0	1.22	2	33.77	+9.64	96	2803	+48	4683
NORTHEAST												
Hawley	74	31	49	-1	1.69	2	30.88	+7.48	85	2083	+64	3860
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	72	36	51	+0	1.61	3	33.67	+10.94	91	2673	+61	4513
Susquehanna	72	30	49	+2	1.76	4	36.03	+10.90	91	2552	+644	4350
WEST CENTRAL												
Butler	70	31	49	-3	1.32	3	31.16	+6.04	104	2417	-52	4269
New_Castle	77	33	51	+1	1.62	2	37.10	+14.00	90	2633	+159	4512
Slippery_Rock	71	32	50	+1	1.47	3	39.25	+14.63	103	2505	+289	4372
CENTRAL												
Altoona/Blair_C	73	32	51	-1	1.13	3	28.61	+6.51	112	2533	-93	4379
Du_Bois	67	35	49	-1	1.47	4	33.83	+8.56	122	2194	-63	3994
Lewistown	78	38	53	+2	1.71	4	31.61	+7.98	90	2875	-11	4770
Middletown	73	41	55	+1	1.80	3	34.58	+11.04	108	3191	-78	5106
Prince_Gallitzi	71	32	48	-2	1.35	6	30.94	+2.64	115	2277	+168	4067
Selinsgrove	71	38	51	+0	1.77	2	30.37	+5.72	95	2706	+21	4575
State_College_P	74	36	52	+2	1.12	3	35.96	+13.65	101	2619	+40	4479
EAST CENTRAL												
Allentown-Bethl	77	39	56	+4	1.49	2	36.21	+10.61	91	3040	+59	4925
Lehighton	69	37	52	-2	3.10	3	42.27	+16.66	109	2560	-311	4399
Matamoras	74	33	50	-2	1.71	3	31.57	+5.79	93	2279	-301	4074
Tobyhanna	72	30	49	+2	1.62	4	44.46	+16.78	101	2722	+986	4528
SOUTHWEST												
Pittsburgh/Alle	72	41	52	+1	1.76	3	26.85	+3.51	107	2965	+315	4884
Derry	71	34	52	+1	1.28	4	36.79	+12.53	96	2614	+116	4476
Meyersdale	70	31	48	-4	1.09	3	32.18	+5.61	103	1958	-507	3726
Mount_Pleasant	73	36	51	+2	1.89	3	33.73	+6.02	107	2535	+304	4407
Pittsburgh_Intl	71	33	51	-2	1.10	4	26.20	+4.38	100	2906	+132	4809
Rector	72	33	51	+2	1.87	4	33.16	+5.45	98	2576	+345	4446
Waynesburg	74	37	51	+2	1.78	5	37.82	+14.09	106	2680	+118	4573
SOUTH CENTRAL												
Biglerville	75	39	53	-1	1.59	3	37.07	+14.61	112	2964	-232	4869
Everett	70	33	49	-3	1.34	3	31.91	+10.29	104	2526	-96	4361
Hanover	77	39	54	+1	1.65	3	38.63	+16.17	90	2986	-210	4888
Shippensburg	78	37	54	-2	1.38	3	31.65	+9.82	88	3114	-70	5025
South_Mountain	71	34	50	-2	1.65	3	38.66	+16.56	95	2358	-259	4169
York_AP	76	41	54	-1	1.49	3	30.74	+6.96	101	3033	-158	4937
SOUTHEAST												
Green_Lane	76	38	55	+3	1.80	3	40.55	+15.77	93	3207	+359	5118
Hamburg	74	36	53	+3	1.62	3	36.40	+7.66	100	2916	+336	4797
Hopewell	75	37	53	-3	1.94	3	37.62	+11.61	95	2869	-504	4736
Lancaster_AP	74	38	55	+2	1.73	3	29.82	+4.77	93	3044	+27	4944
Neshaminy_Falls	72	42	56	+4	1.81	3	29.31	+0.72	86	3304	+329	5213
New_Holland	77	40	55	+2	1.74	3	37.19	+12.14	97	3039	+22	4938
Philadelphia	77	44	59	+3	1.20	3	25.56	+1.35	82	3752	+257	5695
Philadelphia_NE	77	42	57	+2	1.61	3	27.89	+3.68	91	3417	-78	5340
Reading_AP	75	38	55	+3	1.83	3	31.51	+4.88	95	3125	+170	5015
Valley_Forge_Na	77	39	55	-2	2.00	4	35.48	+9.47	95	3004	-369	4889
Willow_Grove	74	41	56	+4	1.35	2	25.17	-3.42	83	3180	+205	5087

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
Precipitation (Rainfall or melted snow/ice) and Pan Evap in inches.
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of .01 inch or more.
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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INTERNET REPORTERS' COMMENTS, BY COUNTY:

Reporters are from Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.



"Hard rains came again on Monday which put a stop to field work. We were thankful for the previous good weather the week before to harvest crops. Most of our NRCS projects have been completed for the year however if we get another dry week there are a few more we will try to complete."

- Ron McCorkle, Crawford County

"Many acres of soybeans and corn to harvest. Farmers will be busy if the weather cooperates. We do not need any more rain."

- Lew Steckler, Erie County

"Finally dry enough for harvesting some corn and hay in drier areas. Poor growing conditions over summer combined with early frost caused some corn originally intended for grain to fail to reach maturity."

- Harry Blanchet, Forest County

"Farmers in Clarion/Venango/Forest/Warren in early October had 3 days of killer frost and are harvesting corn silage. Fields are wet and harvesting corn has been difficult in low areas. There appears to be good yields. Shelled corn could be difficult to make this year. The farmers who had early planted corn is going to make excellent corn for grain. Soybeans appear to be the best ever. The potato crop is terrible. Potatoes are rotting in the field and it has been very difficult for the harvesters to harvest due to wet conditions. There were plenty of apples but due to wet weather, apple crop was not spray for scab and mites and makes for poor quality marketing apple."

- Thomas Tanner, Forest County

"Fields are still very wet for the most part. Normally September and October are pretty dry months here, but this year, farmers are looking for their driest fields to harvest corn silage or are rutting up fields as they go after the silage."

- Wes Ramsey, Warren County

"Crops were drying down fast. After Mondays rain farmers were bust harvesting crops and planting wheat. One of the better weeks for field work."

- Burrel Whitworth, Clinton County

"Most days suitable for field work. 0.10" in my rain gauge for the week."

- Dick Decker, Centre County

"Fair week for field work. Lots of wet soil conditions. Silage harvest nearly completed. Short season corn and beans dry enough for harvest. Good soybean yields reported. Corn continuing to go down slowing

harvest."

- Paul H. Craig, Dauphin County

"A lot of wind and rain this week. Just busy getting ready for winter."

- M. K., Huntington County

"High winds that occurred on Tuesday night and Wednesday caused more crop damage than the wind associated with the recent hurricane. Corn was flattened and soybeans were also blown down. Soybean harvest will be significantly delayed as growers wait for immature beans to dry down in the pods."

- David L. Swartz, Perry County

"Another very wet and stormy week after a dry start. Most areas received over 2 inches of rain. Some corn and soybean harvest progress until the storms hit Tuesday afternoon."

- John Lorr, Westmoreland County

"Most of the week was spent finishing up on silage when the weather was fit. Some soybeans harvested as well. Yield still moderate on both corn and beans."

- Thomas Kerr, Franklin County

"Most alfalfa growers finished 5th cutting for the year along with finishing off the harvest of corn silage. Down corn slowed the process but most were able to make the best of a bad situation. Corn grain harvest got underway however moisture levels are still fairly high and the speed is about 1/4 normal in many fields as reported by several combine operators."

- Bob Anderson, Lancaster County

"Corn yields are looking good for grain, but very tough to harvest and to dry down. Lots of broken stalks or poor root growth leading to lots of dirt going into machinery causing more headaches. Soybean yields are way up. The pastures withstood the rains fairly well, but lots of weeds."

- Axel Linde, Lancaster County

"Over 2 inches of rain starting Tuesday night put an end to most field work for the week. The majority of the wheat was planted prior to then and is beginning to emerge. Corn and soybean harvesting is beginning to pickup, however the wet soil conditions for the week slowed most harvesting. Corn moisture is still in the 20's, however the strong winds again beat up the corn some more making guys anxious to get it in."

- Andrew Frankenfield, Montgomery County

PA Crop Progress for Week Ending October 19, 2003

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	Percent		
Fall plowing	48	67	67
Corn, dent	92	98	98
Corn, mature	75	94	87
Corn, harvested	30	58	43
Corn silage, harvested	88	97	94
Barley, planted	69	92	84
Barley, emerged	46	74	64
Winter wheat, planted	60	76	63
Winter wheat, emerged	34	54	43
Soybeans, harvested	28	21	22
Potatoes, harvested	88	90	90
Alfalfa, 4 th cutting	66	83	80
Timothy clover, 2 nd cutting	94	95	98
Apples, harvested	76	83	82
Grapes, harvested	51	85	90

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending October 19, 2003

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	Percent				
Corn	4	9	23	40	24
Soybeans	2	6	20	53	19
Quality of hay made	7	21	38	30	4
Pasture conditions	5	15	20	48	12

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